

Pocahontas

Chapter 7

NORTH FORK MILL BURNS

Dear Cal:

Saturday night, March 2nd, 1940, was the time that the North Fork Flour Mill was utterly and completely destroyed by fire. This disaster is considered the most unfortunate event of a calamitous nature that has afflicted the Greenbank neighborhood since the days of the Civil War. Mr. J. B. Orndorff owner of the mill had worked in the mill all day without fire. Different persons had passed the mill just after dark and saw no light or fire. The fire was first discovered about 7 p. m., by Clyde Gillisple and Cecil Arbogast who live nearby; the whole inside was a mass of flames when first discovered. In less than a half hours time the whole structure was a mass of ruined machinery, cog-wheels, shafting, fly wheels, and mill stones. The entire loss is estimated at more than \$10,000. The two turbine driving wheels are still in the water deck in regular arrangement. This mill has been the main stand by for the neighborhood for a period of about 60 years. The entire neighborhood sustains a sense of loss and sympathize with Mr Orndorff in his great loss.

This mill was erected by Uriah Hevener, Sr., in the year 1879, on the site of the old Bruffey flour mill. Patrick Bruffey had erected a flour mill on the same site about the year of 1825 which was driven by an over shot water wheel; he also had an up and down saw mill driven by the same water power arrangement, which had been supplanted by a new saw mill in the 1870's.

In the last few years the mill was operated under the firm name of The North Fork Milling Company, but was known far and near as the Hevener Mill. It was erected when the famous white pine trees were plentiful and all the frame work was hewed and dressed by hand, all the framing was mortised, draw bored and pinned with locust pins. No spikes were used in the frame work. The entire building was four stories high including the basement and was a complete master piece of architecture. The modern carpenter would always stand in admiration, and marvel at its perfect construction.

The services of James Elliott was secured to build the mill and with the help of Eldridge Brown and a Mr. Propps did all the carpenter work on the building. Charles P. Brown laid the foundation and did the mason work. The machinery was put in perfect running condition by a millwright by the name of Corann and Robert J. Brown, carpenter helper.

Many different millers operated the mill during the past sixty years. Perhaps Robert N. Gum worked in the mill longer than the other miller.

In keeping up with industry, and in view of the needs of the Greenbank community it may be observed that the old Bruffey mill and the Hevener mill was a center of industry and had their place of importance in the niche of the history of the Greenbank community.

James Elliott, the master mechanic, of the building was a soldier of the Indian wars; was a private under the command of General George A. Custer, and General Reno. He was with Reno's army when General

Custer's Company was massacred in 1876. Mr Elliott's affidavit was taken by Squire John P. Townsend in 1926 for the purpose of securing a pension for Mr Elliott as an Indian war veteran. Mr Elliott died before the papers were ratified and sanctioned by the U. S. Government. Mr Elliott was a Confederate soldier in the Civil War under command of General Kirby Smith, and Dick Taylor in the South West. After the war Mr Elliott worked his way from Mississippi to Iowa, and from there in company with a man named Reynolds, went to the Dakotas on a trapping expedition, and thereby enlisted in Custer's Army.

Greenbank, W. Va. R. W. Brown.

- Pocahontas Times

3/23/40

West Virginia Writers' Project

RESEARCH IDENTIFICATION REPORT

Foodstuffs

Subject Commerce And Industry

Date 5/10/41

Research Worker Samuel G Smith

Date Research Taken 5/7,8,9/41

Typist Samuel G Smith

Date Typed 5/9, 10/41

Source C.W Price. George Hefner & Viola Kee & T.S McNeel Marlinton.W.Va.

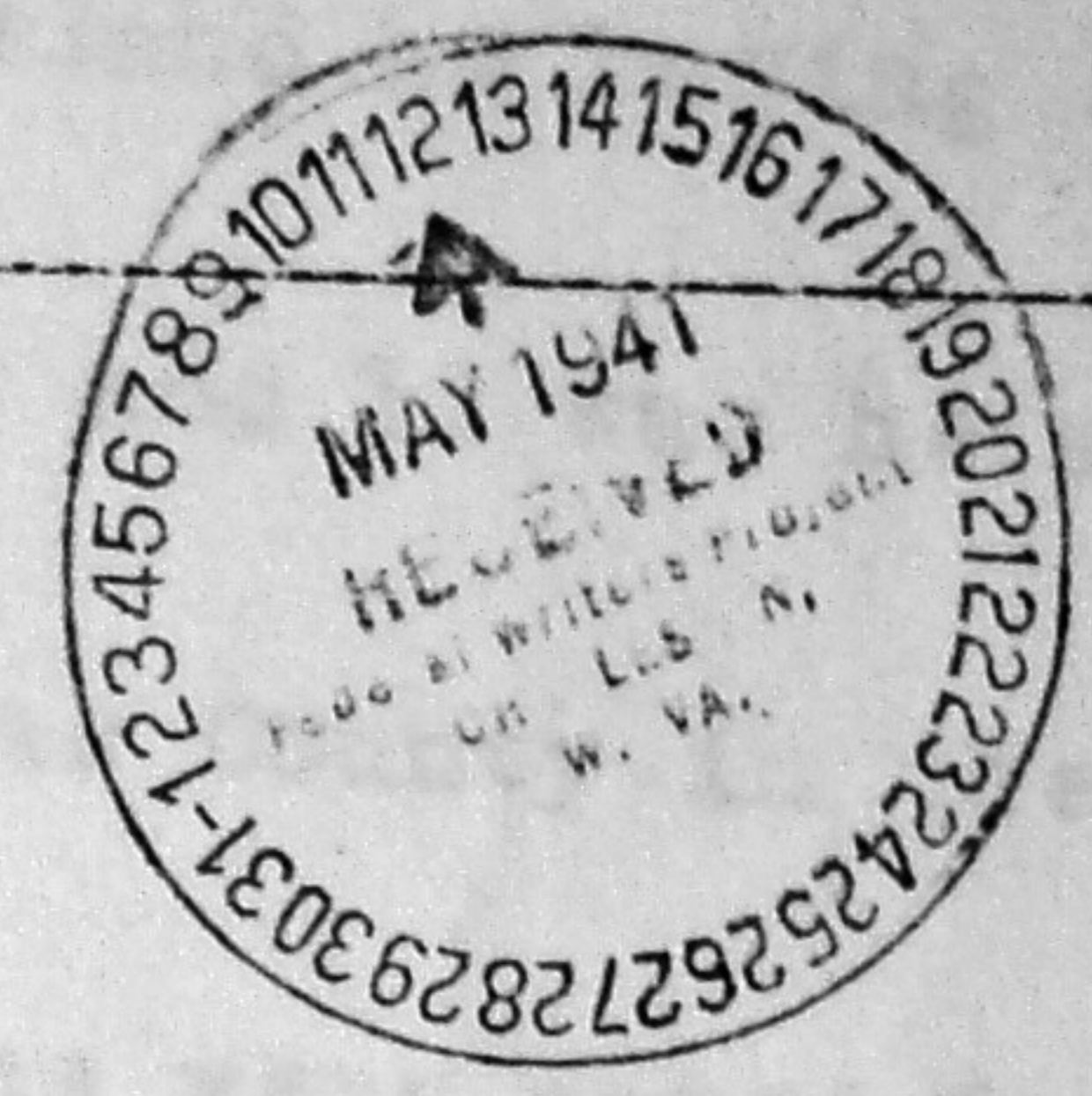
Date Filed _____

W.G McKeever & Nancy A McNeill Buckeye.W.Va.

Maggie Ruckman, J.L McNeel & Anna Wallace Millpoint.W.Va.

R.W Brown Greenbank.W.Va.

W.Va. Geological Survey. Paul Price.



Commerce And Industry. Samuel G Smith Hillsboro. W. Va. Pocahontas Co.

Continued from last week
Broad Ford Sandstone coming from the Jerico Flat and the Kee Flats

near the top of Price hill were used in the Court-House also the piers of the old covered bridge across the Greenbrier at Marlinton came from Jerico and Kee Flats.

About 1775 John Bruffey came to America from Ireland he having learned the stone mason trade before coming to this country and it was he and his ancestors that did most of the stone work in Pocahontas County in the latter part of the 17th century and the 18th he and his sons were noted for their fine stone work and it was John Bruffey with the assistance of his sons John, Patrick, and Mark that built the rock house for Jonathan McNeill near the entrance of McClintic Farms on Swago Creek, they lived in the Swago Community at that time. John Bruffey was a noted stone worker and today you find many of the tombstones that were erected from 1775 to 1807 were made by him from rock from various parts of the county but the most of them came from Bruffeys Creek you find these stones in the McNeel cemetery in the Little Levels also at the Ruckan Cemetery above Millpoint and at the Cloonan or Kee graveyard in the Kee Flats. He also made what was known as grave rocks cut out of our native sandstone, the shape of a casket, these were placed over the grave and made a shelter from the storms and today you find some of these rocks at the McNeel Cemetery between Millpoint and Hillsboro, we no doubt would have more of his work to

Commerce And Industry. Samuel G Smith Hillsboro. W. Va. Pocahontas Co.

ire but he met a sudden death at Millpoint in 1807, he and his family at that time lived at Swago now known as Buckeye and he took a grist of corn to Millpoint to the mill for the family bread supply and it was told the writer by an informant and relative that he was watering his horse when a deer jumped from the bank of the creek into the water and frightened his horse causing him to be thrown off hitting his head on a rock causing almost instant death, his sons followed this profession for many years and Murry Bruffey son of younger John Bruffey traveled about over the county making monuments and today you find some of his work in most of the older graveyards started years ago.

Patrick Bruffey located in the northern part of Pocahontas County near Greenbank, this was about 1822 he erected a grist mill getting the mill stones above Pine Grove on Mill Stone Run or Rileys Creek above Pine Grove these stones are still in use in the North Fork Mill, Bruffey later became Sheriff of Pocahontas County, he died 1853.

A fort was built of native sandstone at the forks of North Fork and Deer Creek about 1775 for the protection of the settlement from the indians in later years the foundation rock and the chimney rock were moved by Peter Warwick and used in dwellings of the North Fork territory in later years.

X George Overholt of Buckeye was a stone mason built hundreds of cellars and chimneys out of our native sand rock back in the 80s and up in the 90s most of these rock were taken from quarries in the Kee Flats either the Fleming